

**First 5 California Children and Families Commission (CCFC)
SCHOOL READINESS FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

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GLOSSARY-

AAP-	American Academy of Pediatrics
ADA-	Americans with Disabilities Act
API-	Academic Performance Index
CBO-	Community Based Organization
CCAFA-	California Children and Families Association
First 5 CCFC-	First 5 California Children and Families Commission
CCPC-	Child Care Planning Council
ECE-	Early Care and Education
ELL-	English Language Learners
IASA-	Improving America's Schools Act
IDEA-	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
LEA-	Local Education Agencies
LEP-	Limited English Proficient
NEGP-	National Education Goals Panel
RFF-	Request for Funding
SR-	School Readiness
STAR-	Standardized Testing and Reporting
TA-	Technical Assistance
TANF-	Temporary Assistance to Needy Families

FISCAL

1. HOW MUCH FUNDING HAS FIRST 5 CCFC APPROVED FOR THE SCHOOL READINESS INITIATIVE?

The School Readiness Program funding total is now \$206,500,000. At the July 19, 2001 meeting First 5 CCFC approved \$200 million over four years for this initiative. At the May 16, 2002 meeting, First 5 CCFC approved expanding the School Readiness Initiative (SRI) to include the 13 counties that previously were not eligible to participate in the School Readiness Matching Funds Program. All 58 counties are now eligible to participate. (7/08/02)

2. WILL ALL COUNTIES RECEIVE A SCHOOL READINESS ALLOCATION?

Yes. All 58 counties are eligible to participate in the School Readiness Initiative and to apply for and receive, SR Matching Funds and SR Implementation Funds. Initially, the 45

counties with low performing schools in API deciles 1-3 (1999/2000) were eligible to receive School Readiness Implementation Funds and Matching Funds. On May 16, 2002 the State Commission approved School Readiness funding for the remaining 13 counties that did not have schools in API deciles 1-3 (1999/2000). (See question 7 for eligibility criteria for the rural/small counties). All counties have always been eligible to participate in technical assistance and will be part of the evaluation and research processes. (7/2/02)

3. DO COUNTIES HAVE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SR INITIATIVE?

No. This is a totally voluntary program that County Commissions and their local partners apply for through an RFF process; quality criteria and fiscal requirements need to be met. Any allocated funds not issued to eligible counties will be taken back to First 5 CCFC for approval to spend on this initiative or for other priority areas. To assist First 5 CCFC with determining the extent of County Commission participation, County Commissions needed to provide "Verification of Intent to Participate" by 12/01 and to indicate the amount of First 5 CCFC School Readiness Matching Funds they plan to use by 5/15/02. Since the remaining 13 rural/small counties have now been approved to participate, they will need to provide the following forms to the First 5 CCFC by September 30, 2002: 1. "Verification of Intent to Participate" form, 2. "Estimated Allocation Plan" form, and 3. "Request for Implementation Funds." A county must submit the "Verification of Intent to Participate" form prior to receiving SR Implementation Funds. (5/29/02)

4. HOW ARE COUNTY COMMISSION ALLOCATIONS ESTABLISHED?

County Commissions are eligible to receive funds based on an allocation methodology agreed to by First 5 CCFC and the CCAFA that combines the number of births in a county with the number of students in schools performing at the API deciles 1-3 (1999/2000 API). FIRST 5 CCFC provides a base allocation of School Readiness funds for 27 counties including the 13 additional counties (Alpine, Sierra, Modoc, Trinity, Mono, Mariposa, Plumas, Amador, Del Norte, Calaveras, Tuolumne, Tehama, and Nevada) effective May 16, 2002 which is a \$100,000 annual SR Matching Fund allocation and a \$25,000 annual Implementation Fund allocation for these counties. (5/23/02)

5. WHICH SCHOOL/COMMUNITIES WOULD BE PRIORITIZED FOR SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAMS?

The School Readiness Initiative targets high priority school communities that had API scores in deciles 1-3 (1999/2000). API scores are now available for schools with 11 or more valid STAR scores. We estimate that approximately 780,000 children would be prioritized for School Readiness Programs in communities that have schools with APIs 1-3 (1999/2000). This corresponds to 1,352 schools in 45 counties. The communities in these school attendance areas have large numbers of low-income children and families, with a high percentage of Hispanic and other ethnic groups. In addition to these targeted 'service sites,' County Commissions could include a limited number of 'teaching center' schools that have similar demographics (students and families served) and have demonstrated positive academic results. Approximately 20% of State FIRST 5 CCFC funds could be used for these school communities or for schools participating in the Immediate Intervention/Underperforming Schools Program or Comprehensive School

Reform Demonstration (i.e., schools with API scores in deciles 4-5) if the county chooses. (Page 16 of the SR RFF, 'Guidelines and Tools for Completing a SR Program Application.)

The priorities for the SR Program Matching Funds for the additional 13 rural/small counties effective May 16, 2002 are: 1. High priority schools as identified in the SR RFF ("SR Guidelines" page 15) which for these purposes, include schools in the deciles 1-5 of the 1999/2000 API, then 2. The school does not qualify with the criteria listed above, but demonstrates special factors that warrant consideration. The special factors that warrant consideration reflecting the "school readiness" related needs of children 0-5 and their families should be described in the application. These 13 counties are: Alpine, Sierra, Modoc, Trinity, Mono, Mariposa, Plumas, Amador, Del Norte, Calaveras, Tuolumne, Tehama, and Nevada. (7/1/02)

6. HOW CAN THE COUNTY COMMISSION AND LOCAL PARTNERS DETERMINE WHICH ARE THE "HIGH PRIORITY SCHOOLS" IN THE COUNTY (DECILES 1 THROUGH 3 IN THE API)?

Charts that list the 'high priority' schools in each county are listed on the First 5 CCFC School Readiness website (<http://www.ccfc.ca.gov/SchoolReady.htm>). In addition, information on the API for California public schools is available at the California Department of Education (CDE) website (<http://www.cde.ca.gov>), under "API – Academic Performance Index and includes API Base Reports." The following information is available: 1) Detailed Instructions for Accessing Reports, 2) County List of Schools, 3) District List of Schools, 4) School Level Reports, and 5) Explanatory Notes that include information about the data contained in the API reports. Information about the STAR 2000 which includes the Stanford 9 (SAT 9) is also included on the CDE website (5/30/01)

7. WHAT ARE THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR THE SCHOOL/COMMUNITIES TO BE SERVED BY THE 13 COUNTY COMMISSIONS APPROVED FOR SCHOOL READINESS INITIATIVE MATCHING FUNDS ON MAY 15, 2002?

The [eligibility criteria](#) for the new 13 counties were described in a July 2, 2002 memo. In this memo the eligibility criteria were defined as follows: First Priority school/communities are "High priority schools," and for these 13 counties include schools in deciles 1-5 on the 1999/2000 API (Academic Performance Index).

After these school/communities are served, then school/communities that meet the second priority may be included. Second Priority: The school does not quality with the criteria listed above, but demonstrates "special factors" that warrant consideration. The "special factors" to be considered must reflect school readiness related needs for children 0-5 and their families and must be described in the application.

If a county does not have schools with API's 1-5, then only "special factor" schools will be included in the application. If a county has a school or schools with API's 1-5, the application must include plans that assure this/these school(s) have an opportunity to participate before considering other schools.

Please note: [The eligibility criteria](#) as defined on page 15 of the School Readiness RFF apply to the original 45 counties [that were eligible for SR Matching Funds based on schools with an API of 1 - 3 in 1999/2000.](#) (12/18/02)

8. IF API RATINGS CHANGE, WILL THE DOLLARS BE REALLOCATED?

No. County Commission's allocation of School Readiness funds for this four-year program will not change regardless of shifts in the API scores for schools. (5/23/02)

9. WILL A COUNTY MATCH BE REQUIRED? HOW MUCH?

A cash match of \$1 of new local funds for every \$1 of State funds is required. The match is required for each fiscal year and for each SR Program. (7/2/02)

10. DOES THE COUNTY MATCH HAVE TO BE MADE UP OF LOCAL PROP.10 FUNDS?

No. The local match can come from any source as long as it is a real cash contribution. No in-kind services of any kind will be allowed as part of local match. (See page 18 of the of the Guidelines and Tools for Completing a School Readiness Program Application) (8/22/01)

11. CAN LOCAL PROP. 10 FUNDS ALREADY COMMITTED TO A SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAM BE USED AS ALL OR PART OF THE COUNTY MATCH? IF WE HAVE A COUNTYWIDE PROJECT, CAN WE COUNT A PERCENTAGE OF THOSE FUNDS BUDGETED TOWARD SCHOOL READINESS COMMUNITIES AS A MATCH?

Yes. County Commission funds already committed or obligated during the current year may be applied as part or all of the county match. County Commission funds committed to projects that will become part of your School Readiness Program during the current fiscal year may be counted as local match. Funds committed to programs, or parts of programs, not included in School Readiness Programs cannot be considered as "match". FIRST 5 CCFC funds may be used to expand an existing or previously planned program that is consistent with the initiative and is included as part of the county's application. (8/22/01)

12. DEFINE "LOCAL PARTNERS" FUNDS. FOR INSTANCE, CAN STATE CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT FUNDS (CDE GENERAL CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT) BE USED AS A MATCH?

'Local partners' may be any public or private agency or group that is committing resources to the planning, development, implementation, and sustaining of local School Readiness Programs. (Please see page 18 of the SR RFF Guidelines). Potentially new government funds (county, local/city, state, or federal) committed to School Readiness Programs in an approved application may be considered as "match". (9/12/01)

13. IF WE ARE MATCHING STATE PROP. 10 MONEY TO MEET COMPENSTION RETENTION INCENTIVES (CRI) REQUIREMENTS, COULD THE COUNTY USE THE SAME LOCAL MATCH AS MATCH FOR THE SCHOOL READINESS INITIATIVE?

No, the local match for Compensation Retention Incentive (CRI) funding cannot be applied to the County Commission's School Readiness Program. The State Prop.10 funds awarded for retention incentives also cannot be applied as match. Moreover, any State First 5 CCFC funds received from any other State initiative also cannot be used as cash match. Please note: This fiscal policy has been updated to align with CRI policy. Double matching does not support the intent of the State matching funds initiatives. (5/27/03)

14. CAN STATE FIRST 5 CCFC FUNDS RECIVED BY A COUNTY COMMISSION FOR ANOTHER PROJECT THAT COMPLEMENTS THE LOCAL SR PROGRAM BE USED AS LOCAL MATCH?)?

No. State First 5 CCFC funds cannot be used as local match. (5/20/03)

15. CAN FAMILY-FOCUSED FUNDS (E.G., HEALTHY START, FAMILY RESOURCE CENTERS) BE COUNTED AS MATCH IF THEY SERVE BOTH K-12 AND PRE-K CHILDREN?

Only funds supporting children 0 to 5 and their families can be considered as part of the required match. Other local matching funds represent local partnership but need to be reported separately. (9/12/01)

16. CAN THE FIRST ALLOCATIONS FOR MATCHING FUNDS BE USED ONLY TO SUPPORT APPROVED SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAMS? CAN THIS MONEY BE USED TO SUPPORT POTENTIAL SITES?

Funds awarded to support approved School Readiness Programs are expected to be used to support the programs outlined in the application that meet the required criteria. They will not be awarded to support potential sites/programs. Implementation Funds are intended to be used for that purpose. (5/23/02)

17. CAN A PERCENTAGE OF AN EXISTING POSITION WITH NEWLY ASSIGNED SCHOOL READINESS DUTIES BE CONSIDERED LOCAL CASH MATCH? FOR EXAMPLE, 15% OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATOR'S TIME WILL BE DEDICATED TO SR, AND THE COUNTY WOULD LIKE TO CONSIDER 15% OF THE SALARY AS MATCH. (EXISTING POSITION IS DEFINED AS A POSITION CURRENTLY IN PLACE AT A SPECIFIED SALARY AND TIME BASE.)

No. A percentage of an existing position is not considered as local cash match for the First 5 California School Readiness Matching Funds because staff positions are considered to be "in kind" contributions. Please note that in-kind contributions are defined as facilities, supplies, services, etc. that are not provided by a 'cash'disbursement" (pg. 18 SR RFF Guidelines). All cash match must be clearly traceable and auditable and demonstrate a

new/expanded/enhanced level of services for children 0-5 in the 5 'Essential and Coordinated Elements' of the SR Program.

However, a new or expanded position funded with dollars that are traceable and auditable to the School Readiness Program can be counted as cash match. There must be a clear trail for the exchange of funds between partners (e.g., MOU with local partners that clearly specifies the new funds). Please note that acceptable sources of local cash match include "new expenditures by school districts and local public agencies in excess of existing local investments..." (pg. 18 SR RFF Guidelines).

Of course, all partner contributions are valuable and are important to developing and sustaining SR Programs. In-kind contributions can be included in the total investment in School Readiness ~~over~~ the required \$1: \$1 cash match. For further information on local cash match, please refer to SR RFF page 18 and please refer to FAQ #9-18 regarding local cash match.)

NOTE: To avoid supplantation, First 5 CCFC funds "can in no way be used to fund any levels of service that were or are currently in existence at the time of the purported expenditure." For further information on supplantation, please refer to the Attorney General's opinion titled, *Attorney General Opinion on Supplementation vs. Supplantation*, posted on the First 5 CCFC website under Annual Reports and Fiscal Issues. (6/25/03)

18. IS IT ACCEPTABLE FOR A COUNTY COMMISSION TO AMORTIZE OR PRORATE A CAPITAL EXPENDITURE SUCH AS THE COST OF A SCHOOL READINESS OR PRESCHOOL FACILITY OR LAND PURCHASE OVER A 4-YEAR FUNDING PERIOD FOR THE SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAM? FOR EXAMPLE, A LOCAL PARTNER PURCHASES LAND FOR A PRESCHOOL SITE AND PAYS THE TOTAL COST OF THE LAND PURCHASE AT ONE TIME TO AVOID INTEREST CHARGES.

Yes. Since the First 5 CCFC is unable to fund capital expenditures such as a facility or land purchase, it is acceptable for County Commissions to use capital expenditures as local cash match and to prorate the purchase price of a SR facility or land over the 4-year SR Program period. This policy will assist counties in their efforts to develop facilities for School Readiness Programs and related strategies such as preschool and infant/toddler programs. (5/20/03)

19. WILL THE STATE PROVIDE FOR IMPLEMENTATION FUNDS?

FIRST 5 CCFC will provide for annual Implementation Funds of between \$25,000 and \$100,000, depending on the size of a county's allocation. (See Allocation Tables on page 17 of the SR RFF, 'Guidelines and Tools for Completing a SR Program Application.) After submitting the "Verification of Intent to Participate" form, a County Commission may request Implementation Funds at any time. The Implementation Funds do not require a local match and are available for each year for four years, or County Commissions may request up to two years of their four-year Implementation Funds immediately. (5/23/02)

20. CAN IMPLEMENTATION FUNDS BE USED FOR SCHOOL READINESS PLANNING, OR DOES PLANNING HAVE TO BE IN PLACE BEFORE IMPLEMENTATION MONIES CAN BE DRAWN DOWN? CAN DOLLARS BE ALLOCATED TO HELPING SITES WITH FUTURE APPLICATION PERIODS?

SR Implementation Funds can be used for any part of the four-year School Readiness Initiative, including but not restricted to administrative start-up costs, staff, needs-assessment, technical assistance, training, and program costs. The submission of a completed "Verification of Intent to Participate" form is required to receive SR Implementation Funds. (5/23/02)

21. WHEN WILL THE COUNTIES RECEIVE THEIR FUNDS?

Initially, funds will be disbursed as soon as the County Commission's application is approved. The County Commission will be notified in writing when funding has been approved by First 5 CCFC. Simultaneously, the disbursement of funds will be requested. The funds should arrive in the county about four weeks later. Subsequent year funding will require annual expenditure reports, budget revisions, and annual budget requests. (7/02/02)

22. WHEN CAN COUNTY COMMISSIONS REQUEST AND RECEIVE SUBSEQUENT YEAR PROGRAM AND IMPLEMENTATION FUNDING?

After initial approval, if all the necessary forms have been submitted and approved, subsequent year program funds can be requested and disbursed prior to the beginning of the fiscal year. Implementation funds may be requested and disbursed at any time during the year. (5/20/03)

23. IF OUR APPLICATION PROVIDES A BUDGET FOR THE FOUR-YEAR SCHOOL READINESS INITIATIVE, WILL THE COUNTY COMMISSION RECEIVE ALL BUDGETED FUNDS IN ONE ALLOCATION OR IN FOUR ANNUAL ALLOCATIONS?

The First 5 CCFC has provided an allocation chart for County Commissions' planning purposes in the School Readiness Program Funding Partnerships document ("Guidelines and Tools for completing a SR Program Application"). The disbursement of funds is made upon approval of the SR application and annually thereafter. We are working to develop the actual disbursement schedule for School Readiness funds. At this time, we expect that expenditure reports and budget revisions will be required annually. (5/23/02)

24. WILL COUNTIES BE REQUIRED TO REPORT EXPENDITURE DATA TO THE FIRST 5 CCFC?

Expenditure data must be included in the county annual report and must be addressed in the county's annual fiscal audit. In addition, annual expenditure reports and progress reports will be required as part of the School Readiness evaluation. (8/22/01)

25. IS THERE A TIME LIMIT FOR THE EXPENDITURE OF SCHOOL READINESS FUNDS?

County Commissions will receive allocations for four years beginning on the date their first application is approved. The policy intent for School Readiness Matching Funds and Implementation Funds is to have County Commissions expend these funds within four years of their approved application. Additional guidance will be provided regarding expenditure reporting for School Readiness funds. (9/12/01)

26. MUST A SCHOOL READINESS APPLICATION INCLUDE ALL BUDGET FORMS? (FORMS 4A, 4B AND 4C.)

Yes. All SR applications must include all budget forms for each SR Program. If a County Commission chooses to submit several program applications in a single application, each SR Program submitted must include a complete set of budget forms for each SR Program. Please note that Form 4b and 4c include an accounting of First 5 CCFC funds only. Also Form 4a line C must reconcile with the total on Form 4b. Form 4a, line C is used to disburse your annual FIRST 5 CCFC SR Matching Funds request. The budget narrative needs to be very clear and specific (Please see instructions on pg. 28 “Guidelines and Tools for completing a SR Program Application.”).

A County Commission may submit one consolidated application for each round of applications with narrative descriptions and budgets for: a) each SR Program in the county, and/or b) a district or county-wide system with school/community descriptors that deliver the 5 “Essential and Coordinated Elements” and that meet fiscal and quality requirements. Each program application must include all the necessary budget forms (Forms 4a, b, and c). Please be aware that a new application is required when a new SR Program(s) is considered. (7/02/02)

27. ARE THERE RESTRICTIONS ON THE USE OF FIRST 5 CCFC FUNDS FOR SR PROGRAMS AND OTHER LOCAL PROJECTS?

Yes, there are restrictions on the use of First 5 CCFC funds for fixed or capital assets and for capital improvements. Please review recent Fiscal Memos No. 01-04 and No. 01-06, also available on the First 5 CCFC website www.ccfc.ca.gov - under ‘Annual Reports and Fiscal Issues.’ (7/24/02)

EVALUATION

28. WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE EVALUATION COMPONENT OF THE SCHOOL READINESS INITIATIVE?

The School Readiness Initiative evaluation is embedded within the overall statewide evaluation of First 5 California. The SR evaluation design is a combination of several approaches that are being used to collect data about children and families served, the programs and schools serving them, and promising approaches/models. Using both quantitative and qualitative methods, the evaluation builds on the growing knowledge base about school readiness, and has received input and review from key stakeholders at the

state and local levels. For specific details, the SR evaluation design document can be accessed on the First 5 California evaluation web site at:
<http://www.prop10evaluation.com>. (6/09/03)

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

29. WHO WILL BE PROVIDING TA TO THE COUNTIES AS THEY DEVELOP THEIR SCHOOL READINESS PLANS?

The First 5 CCFC has entered into an Interagency Agreement with UCLA to provide interim TA to counties. All counties are eligible to participate.

As part of this agreement, UCLA will provide TA to counties in the following ways:

1. Create Tool Kits that will include power point presentations related to School Readiness and the 5 “Essential and Coordinated Elements,” research briefs, and resource materials,
2. School Readiness website and a List Serv for County Commissions and local SR Programs,
3. A series of regional meetings on SR strategies, programs, and resources including networking and information sharing opportunities, and
4. Limited consultation to County Commissions.

To be added to the UCLA List Serv visit the website at:

[PROP10TA-L- request@LISTSERV.UCLA.EDU](mailto:PROP10TA-L-request@LISTSERV.UCLA.EDU).

For more information contact: Mary View-Schneider; Assistant Director, UCLA Center for Healthier Children, Families, and Communities; phone: (310) 206-0040; fax: (310) 206-3180. (7/12/02).

PROGRAM

30. WHAT ARE THE KEY THRESHOLD QUESTIONS THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED DURING THE COUNTY COMMISSION’S DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW PROCESS FOR SR PROGRAMS BEFORE FIRST 5 CCFC IS ABLE TO APPROVE SR FUNDS FOR THE COUNTY COMMISSION’S SR PROGRAMS?

The threshold questions that need to be addressed for all School Readiness Programs during the County Commission’s development and review process are:

1. Do the proposed new/expanded strategies address the assessed community needs, including prioritized needs and service strategies identified by families? Are the services appropriate for the population being served?
2. What are the expected outcomes for the program? How will the new/expanded program services better prepare children for school? How will you track those improvements?
3. Does the School Readiness Program provide for services in all 5 Essential and Coordinated Elements?

4. Do the new/expanded services and program serve **only** children 0-5? If not, please specify additional funding streams and partners that provide services to children older than five.
5. Does the School Readiness Program provide new and/or expanded services to children 0-5 (i.e., what is the added value)? Are the existing services/resources clearly identified and described?
6. Does the School Readiness Program demonstrate cost-effective and cost-appropriate use of Prop 10 funds? Does the budget narrative explain the connection between the SR Program and the costs? Are assurances provided that supplantation would not occur?
7. Has the program considered other potential funding streams to pay for direct services? Is the explanation clearly presented?
8. What percentage of the funds being spent is in the administrative area? How is the expenditure of funds for administrative purposes related to providing new or expanded services to children 0-5? Please justify the need for all administrative expenses.

(July 22, 2002)

31. WHAT AGES ARE COVERED BY THE FIRST 5 SCHOOL READINESS INITIATIVE MATCHING FUNDS?

The First 5 School Readiness Initiative Matching Funds can be used to provide services covering all five "Essential and Coordinated Elements" to children 0 (prenatal) to 5 (through the fifth birthday).

The intent of the First 5 School Readiness funds is to assure the provision of all five "Essential and Coordinated Elements" to children before they enter kindergarten. Once the child enters kindergarten, he/she becomes part of the school system and is eligible for all services and programs provided through the K-12 education system. Services now can be provided either by the school system directly, or through referral. (12/18/02)

32. WOULD HIGHER PRIORITY BE GIVEN TO BUILDING ON AN EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE (E.G., FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER OR HEALTHY START) OR FOR STARTING IN COMMUNITIES WITHOUT ANY INFRASTRUCTURE?

The first funding cycle in 2001/2002 will include "ready" sites, with a strong infrastructure and ability to implement the five "Essential and Coordinated Elements" immediately upon funding. For the 2002/2003 funding cycle, the First 5 CCFC has been advised that prioritizing for building on existing infrastructure or starting in communities without available infrastructure needs to be done at the county level. Various factors such as where schools are located and earlier success with using different infrastructure organizations and facilities need to be considered in developing SR Programs that can provide all 5 'Essential and Coordinated Elements.' TA such as mapping demographic data and resources (existing sites for medical and social service providers, Even Start, Healthy Start, Early Head Start/Head Start, State preschools, etc.) has been developed to help County Commissions. Please see the First 5 CCFC website located at the following internet address: <http://www.ccfc.ca.gov>. (5/30/02)

33. WHAT CRITERIA WOULD APPLICANTS NEED TO MEET FOR THE 5 ‘ESSENTIAL AND COORDINATED ELEMENTS’? WHAT MINIMUM SERVICE LEVELS WOULD BE NECESSARY?

This chart provides samples/examples of criteria and minimum service levels for the 5 “Essential and Coordinated Elements.” A substantial amount of work will be needed to fully develop the criteria for each ‘Element’ for the SR Programs. First 5 CCFC will develop this information with the SR Work Group and partners. Additional research-based information, tools, and resources will be provided through technical assistance strategies. (5/30/01)

Very Preliminary Service and Criteria Levels for 5 ‘Essential and Coordinated Elements’

This chart is intended to be used as guidance and technical assistance to assist with developing and implementing strategies for the 5 ‘Essential and Coordinated Elements.’ The strategies at each SR Program need to improve the quality and integration of current service systems while exemplifying the following principles:

- Voluntary family participation
- Family focus and decision-making
- Community investment and design
- Inclusive, culturally/linguistically competent
- Addresses needs of children with disabilities and other special needs
- Collaboration
- Builds on family and community assets
- Coordinates existing services and infrastructure

5 Essential and Coordinated Elements	IF these Service Levels are provided,	THEN use these Criteria for guidance
<i>Early Care and Education</i>	<p>1.Improved access to quality early childhood education and care (center and home based) appropriate to family needs</p> <p>2.Provide cross-training and child development info/resources for families and early care/education providers working with children 0-5 in school attendance area</p> <p>3.Improve quality of early childhood education providers</p> <p>4. Provide a multifaceted parent program including parent participation in parent resource center activities with other parents, parent volunteers in classroom, attending school events and field trips, etc.</p>	<p>1.HHSA Early Head Start and Head Start Program Standards or State Preschool PreK Guidelines (for center based care) or R&R El Comienzo guidance (for family day care homes)</p> <p>3. Participate in CARES or other effective training, recruitment, and retention program</p> <p>4. Adapt and implement Parent as Teachers (PAT) Chicago Child Parent Centers (CPC), Head Start, or similar parent involvement and early childhood education program.</p>

<i>Parenting/Family Support</i>	<p>1. Research-based home visitation program that includes ‘school readiness’ in goals.</p> <p>2. Adult education programs that address family interests and needs as determined through community assessment</p> <p>3. Parent/family leadership development strategies</p>	<p>1.a. Home visitation strategy appropriate to population served and service goals. 1.b. Linked to services through Family Resource Centers, Healthy Start sites, etc. 1.c. On-going staff development and supervision</p> <p>2.a. Adult education programs through recognized providers such as school districts and community colleges 2.b. Provide family literacy, high school completion, and English As A Second Language programs</p>
<i>Health and Social Services</i>	<p>1. Provision or referral and follow-up to basic health care, including prenatal care, mental health counseling, nutrition services, drug and alcohol counseling, and ‘family service plan’ as needed</p> <p>2. Expand health insurance enrollment for all children and families, including those who are uninsured and underinsured</p> <p>3. Provide early screening for children’s health and developmental problems and coordinate early intervention services for children with disabilities</p> <p>4. Provide cross-training and child development info/resources for providers working in child and family services such as health, mental health, refugee/immigrant services, faith communities, criminal justice/probation, alcohol and drug prevention and treatment, etc.</p>	<p>1. Access to prenatal and pediatric care – so every child has a medical and dental home</p> <p>2. Access to enrollment in Healthy Families, MediCal, and other available health insurance</p>
<i>School Capacity/Readiness</i>	<p>1. Communicate kindergarten and early elementary standards with families, community agencies, early education and care providers (center and home)</p> <p>2. Provide cross-training and child development info/resources for early elementary teachers, staff, and administrators</p>	<p>1. Educating parents, teachers, and providers on PreK and K standards and Guidelines</p>

	<p>3. Coordinate early screening for children's health and developmental problems and early intervention services for children with disabilities</p> <p>4. Provide outreach and kindergarten transition for parents of children 0-5, including family involvement and leadership development</p> <p>5. Continue 'wrap around' services for children through grade 3</p>	
<i>Site Infrastructure and Administration</i>	<p>1. School based or linked services</p> <p>2. Provide for facility (purchase and set-up only if necessary)</p> <p>3. Site/district/county coordination</p> <p>4. Clerical support</p> <p>5. Training and development for staff and volunteers</p> <p>6. Evaluation/Research</p> <p>Find out what strategies and programs are effective; Implement them in ways that make sense at the local level; Make sure they are working well for our children and families from diverse backgrounds</p>	

34. HOW WILL THE NEW PRE-K GUIDELINES THAT THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (CDE) IS CURRENTLY IMPLEMENTING FIT INTO THE CRITERIA FOR THE 'ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS'?

The new CDE Pre-K Guidelines will be reviewed and considered as criteria for the 'early care and education essential element' for appropriate service delivery settings. The Guidelines are an excellent resource for program planning. (8/30/01)

35. HOW WILL THE NEED FOR USING STRATEGIES BASED ON RESEARCH BE BALANCED WITH 'NEW IDEAS' PROPOSED BY COMMUNITY GROUPS/MEMBERS?

The First 5 CCFC, County Commissions, and other partners will work together to summarize what we know about 'what works' and 'promising practices' in the 5 "Essential and Coordinated Elements" for the SR Programs. It was agreed that this represents a substantial amount of work. Generally, what we know is based on research on discrete program elements and not the combination of programs/strategies proposed for the SR Programs. We will need to ask communities to check available research and provide a strong link to research-based practices when innovative ideas are proposed. (5/30/01)

36. HOW DO THE SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAMS COMPLEMENT THE FAMILY RESOURCE CENTERS THAT SOME COUNTY COMMISSIONS HAVE DEVELOPED AND/OR FUNDED?

Family Resource Centers may be less focused on ‘school readiness’ than the proposed SR Programs, yet are possible foundations for the SR Programs and are based on the same principles of collaboration and local decision-making. (5/30/01)

37. ONE OF THE FIVE ELEMENTS IS EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION (ECE). CAN YOU BETTER DEFINE THIS ELEMENT? IS IT A STRUCTURED PROGRAM?

This includes strategies that focus on School Readiness goals for children such as ECE services, improved access to high quality ECE through referrals, information and outreach to parents and providers using strategies that are culturally and linguistically appropriate and address the needs of children with disabilities and special needs and improved implementation of effective practices through training for parents and all types of ECE providers. (See page 14 of the SR RFF Guidelines) (8/22/01)

38. WOULD THE ‘EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION’ PROVIDED UNDER THE SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAMS BE LIMITED TO LICENSED CARE OR WOULD LICENSE-EXEMPT TYPES OF SERVICE DELIVERY BE CONSIDERED? WILL THERE BE A HOME-BASED COMPONENT FOR SCHOOL READINESS?

The goal is to link ALL early care and education settings (licensed, license-exempt, families, informal care, family child care, etc.) to the neighborhood school sites, as well as provide services at or near schools or through outreach or mobile delivery strategies. (5/30/01)

39. WILL THE SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAMS RECOGNIZE THE REALITIES OF SMALL OR ISOLATED COMMUNITIES?

Maximum flexibility and creativity will be encouraged in building local community ‘programs’ that meet minimum service level requirements. (5/30/01)

40. IF WE HAVE ONLY ONE SCHOOL IN OUR COUNTY IN API DECILES 1-3 AND WOULD LIKE TO USE OUR SCHOOL READINESS FUNDS AND LOCAL MATCH TO CREATE A COUNTYWIDE SYSTEM, MAY WE PROCEED? (Pertinent for County Commissions receiving baseline SR allocations)

Yes. First 5 CCFC School Readiness funds can be used to create a countywide SR system that encompasses and evaluates all 5 “Essential and Coordinated Elements” for participating students as long as the targeted students/families in the eligible schools and communities receive focused interventions that provide demonstrable results. The ultimate goal of the SR Initiative is to bring SR Programs to scale so that all families, schools, and communities work together for student success. (9/12/01)

41. IF THE IDENTIFIED HIGH-PRIORITY SCHOOL(S) FOR OUR COUNTY DOES NOT CHOOSE TO PARTICPATE IN THE SR MATCHING FUNDS INITIATIVE, MAY WE DEVELOP SR PROGRAMS WITH OTHER INTERESTED SCHOOL(S)?

Yes, if the identified high-priority for your county does not choose to participate in the SR Matching Funds initiative, the county commission may develop SR Programs with other interested school(s) that meet the next level of eligibility (e.g., special factors) or a countywide SR Program may be implemented. Please provide documentation of the rationale regarding the decision not to include the high-priority school and for the selection of participating schools. (5/20/03)

42. IF OUR COUNTY COMMISSION HAD ESTABLISHED AN ALLOCATION PLAN FOR THE SR MATCHING FUNDS BASED ON THE HIGH-PRIORITY SCHOOLS IN THE COUNTY AND ONE OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICTS CHOOSES NOT TO PARTICIPATE, MAY WE REALLOCATE THE FUNDS TO THE OTHER HIGH-PRIORITY SCHOOLS?

Yes, the County Commission may reallocate SR Matching funds between high-priority schools/communities during the annual budget request process. On an annual basis, County Commissions will be given an opportunity to revise the SR Program work plans/strategies and budgets for all approved programs. (5/20/03)

43. WHO ARE THE ESSENTIAL PARTNERS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL? ARE ESSENTIAL PARTNERS INVOLVED ALREADY, OR WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN TO GENERATE PARTICIPATION?

Schools, plus their district (and county office of education where appropriate), are essential and required partners in local SR Programs. Families were agreed to be required partners, with active engagement, advisory, and participation processes. The language and culture of the community/neighborhood needs to be reflected by the 'partners.' In addition, at a minimum, it was advised that at least one partner be included for each of the 5 'Essential and Coordinated Elements' of the SR Programs (i.e., school districts or county office of education for the 'schools' readiness for children' element). It was also recommended that a plan be developed for active outreach for the early care and education community (e.g., Child Care Planning Council, Child Care Association, Resource and Referral Agencies, informal care and family care). (5/30/01)

44. IS THE EDUCATION SYS TEM A MANDATED PARTNER OF SCHOOL READINESS?

Yes. SR Programs Matching Funds are offered to coordinate, develop, implement and sustain a system of collaborative school-based or school-linked services, programs, and informal supports based on research or promising practices to improve "school readiness" for children, families, communities, and schools. (8/22/01)

45. DOES THE COUNTY'S STRATEGIC PLAN NEED TO BE REVISED TO REFERENCE THIS SR INITIATIVE? IF SO, CAN SR IMPLEMENTATION FUNDS BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE?

It depends as some strategic plans have a sufficiently broad scope that they do not need to be revised. SR Implementation Funds can be used to support operations (planning, development, and implementation efforts) or for program funding needed to establish and operate a viable School Readiness Program. (8/22/01)

46. WITHIN THE LATINO COMMUNITY AND OTHER COMMUNITIES OF COLOR, SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT IS INTRINSICALLY INTERTWINED WITH ALL OTHER ASPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT. HOW WILL THIS BE ADDRESSED?

First 5 CCFC encourages CBOs and faith-based organizations to participate as important contributors to School Readiness. Faith-based organizations may be key to many communities by providing different types of support and information for parents/families. Their involvement is important to SR success and may be part of a culturally and linguistically appropriate strategy. Please be aware that under certain circumstances, the State constitution may prohibit the expenditure of State funds for specific purposes. (8/22/01)

47. COULD YOU PROVIDE A CLARIFICATION OF TIMELINES AND CRITICAL DATES?

Please refer to pages 12-13 of the 'Guidelines and Tools for completing a School Readiness Program Application' dated March 14, 2002 in the School Readiness RFF package.

TIMELINE AND CRITICAL DATES

September 15, 2002	County Commission School Readiness Program applications need to be received by the FIRST 5 CCFC.
November 1, 2002	School Readiness Programs Matching Funds Grant Awards announced and allocations begin.
December 15, 2002	County Commission School Readiness Program applications need to be received by the First 5 CCFC.
February 1, 2003	School Readiness Programs Matching Funds Grant Awards announced and allocations begin.
March 15, 2003	County Commission School Readiness Program applications need to be received by the First 5 CCFC. Available for new 13 County Commissions only.

6/25/2003

May 1, 2003	School Readiness Programs Matching Funds Grant Awards announced and allocations begin.
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June 16, 2003	County Commission School Readiness Program applications need to be received by the First 5 CCFC. Last scheduled SR application period.
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August 1, 2003 (Anticipated)	School Readiness Programs Matching Funds Grant Awards announced and allocations begin. There may be a delay in announcing the awards due to the high volume of applications received.
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Extension dates for SR Program Applications

September 8, 2003	County Commission School Readiness Program applications need to be received by the First 5 CCFC.
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October 20, 2003	County Commission School Readiness Program applications need to be received by the First 5 CCFC
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January 2004 (Anticipated)	School Readiness Programs Matching Funds Grant Awards announced and allocations begin. The delay in announcing the awards is due to the high volume of anticipated applications to be received during this review period.
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School Readiness Program Matching Funds applications may be submitted on September 8 and October 20, 2003 upon written request for an extension. Requests for extension must be in writing to the First 5 CCFC, identify the number of SR Program applications planned for submission on September 8 and/or October 20, 2003, and explain the need for the extension. **This supplements the “Timeline and Critical Dates” as published in the March 14, 2002 SR RFF.**

*Note: This is the date that FIRST 5 CCFC will *initiate* the disbursement of funds. Please allow at least four weeks from this time for funds to arrive in the county. (6/25/03)
